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Article (Published Version)

Walden, Victoria Grace (2014) Animation: textural difference and the materiality of Holocaust memory. *Animation Studies Online Journal*, 9. ISSN 1930-1928

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Victoria Grace Walden – Animation: Textural Difference and the Materiality of Holocaust Memory

Posted on [December 31, 2014](#) by [Amy Ratelle](#)

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The notion of “Holocaust animation” may seem paradoxical; how can a medium which, in the popular eye, is usually associated with comedy, play and fantasy be used to remember one of the 20th century’s most traumatic events? By examining the textural difference of animation to our lived world in texts such as *Silence* (Yadin and Bringas 1998) and *I was a Child of Holocaust Survivors* (Ann Marie Fleming 2010), it becomes clear how the medium can emphasise the fragile materiality of Holocaust memory. Adopting a methodology which blends transcendental phenomenology, as first outlined by Edmund Husserl, and existential phenomenology, brought into film studies in particular by Vivian Sobchack and Laura U. Marks, this paper considers the ability for animation to engage spectators with the materiality of memory, through bringing to the foreground a different way of experiencing the world to the quotidian.

Jennifer Barker (2009) suggests the usefulness in adopting a “textural” rather than solely “textual” film analysis (p. 25). She highlights that a turn to the materiality of films and animations can offer new readings of such works. In exploring the materiality of memory in the animated form, this paper introduces new terms which are helpful to such a discussion. *Fullness* is here forth used to describe the amount of content on the scene – the density of the animated materiality. For example, sequences which have a detailed background with characters whose costumes are detailed and elaborate might be considered to exhibit an extreme fullness, or be a dense image. In contrast, sequences wherein characters have no facial features, or, are merely an outline against a bland background with little detail, are considered to lack fullness, and thus have little density in terms of their materiality. Another term introduced in this work is the idea of *sketchedness*, which refers to the type of line used in the animations. A sequence which exhibits rough, sketched outlines (suggesting a hand-drawn quality) of objects and characters is considered to exhibit sketchedness, while one with firm outlines (perhaps suggesting a nod towards more realist styles of film-making) evidences less sketchedness. A lack of density and extreme sketchedness might suggest to the spectator incompleteness in the image because it starkly contrasts their perception of the lived-world, where the horizon exhibits fullness in terms of its range of colour and detail, and outlines of people and objects appear strongly defined. These two terms mobilise an understanding of the materiality of memory in *Silence* and *I was a Child of Holocaust Survivors*. *Silence* explores the testimony of Tana Ross, whose grandmother kept her hidden in the Nazi transit camp Theresienstadt when she was a child. On the surface, the film follows a typical testimonial narrative: touching on her pre-war life, her capture and then her post-war experience in Sweden. However, it does not tell her story using a traditional three-act structure, but rather post-war moments trigger Tana’s Holocaust memories. *Silence* expresses her story through the juxtaposition of archive film and photographs, and cut out and cel animation. A black and white outline figure of Tana as a young girl floats over archive footage in the opening sequence, illustrating a detachment of the subjective from the real, and black and white ‘woodcut’ style sequences (by Ruth Lingford) of Tana’s Holocaust memories interrupt the coloured animation (by Tim Webb) of post-war life, which serves to differentiate the temporal planes of Tana’s experiences.

I was a Child of Holocaust Survivors is based on the memoir of Bernice Eisenstein, and explores her fantasy of her father as a saviour of the Holocaust. The film examines second generation trauma. While Bernice was not alive during the Holocaust, 'false' traumatic memories of the event invade her life as she is affected by the experiences of her parents. Marianne Hirsch (2012) explains that second-generation survivors (those whose parents experienced the Holocaust) engage in acts of "postmemory" – "the relationship that the 'generation after' bears to the personal, collective, and cultural trauma of those who came before – to experiences they 'remember' only by means of the stories, images and behaviours among which they grew up" (p. 5). Bernice is troubled by her parents and their friends. As she grows older she becomes more aware of their shared history as she notices tattooed numbers on their forearms and sees how they eagerly watch the trial of Adolph Eichmann. Bernice turns to her own imagination to try to understand how her father, her hero, survived. In doing so, she creates a narrative that combines popular cultural imagery – such as iconography of the Western genre – with Jewish and Holocaust symbols. This fantastical story enables her to confirm her father's heroic status.

Director Ann Marie Fleming illustrates Bernice's complex relationship with her parents' past through shifting animation styles achieved by using a collaboration of animators: Lillian Chan, Howie Shia and Kevin Langdale. Stark black and white sequences illustrate Bernice's subjectivity, while paler scenes with thin outlines or hints of grey or subtle colour – mostly yellows or browns – express her actual encounters with the adult survivors. Harsh, rough sketch marks are used to express scenarios from the Holocaust, such as a fantasised scene in which Bernice appears to see a pile of dead bodies at a concentration camp, and these are contrasted with the bright sequences used to illustrate the fantasy of her father's story. The film's illustration style is inspired by Bernice's own artwork, which decorates her memoir.

Context

Critics have long been sceptical of representations of the Holocaust in popular culture. Thus, one might be wary of Holocaust animations because of the medium's association with mainstream entertainment, particularly for children. This might make one particularly sceptical of *Silence* and *I was a Child of Holocaust Survivors* because they portray children's narratives. However, animation as a medium can encompass many kinds of narratives. Much of the criticism levied towards representations of the Holocaust in general has been influenced by the writings of survivors Elie Wiesel and Saul Friedlander. Wiesel (1989) lambasted the trivial nature of NBC's mini-series *Holocaust* (Marvin J. Chomsky 1978), claiming such a short melodramatic series cannot show the extent of the event, while Friedlander claims the Holocaust is an "event at the limits" (Friedlander 1992, p. 3). By this he means that while the Holocaust "is as accessible" as any other event, it challenges traditional approaches to historicisation and narrativisation (p. 2-3) and thus calls for a "new voice" (p. 10). The fact no photographic or filmic footage of the gas chambers in action exists, at least to our knowledge, has also fuelled much debate about filmic references to the Holocaust. Filmmakers Claude Lanzmann and Jean-Luc Godard famously debated *la pellicule maudite* – the literal translation is "the confounded film," but this term is most often interpreted as "the missing images" of the Holocaust (Saxton 2008, p. 59). While Lanzmann argues he would never show an image of the gas chambers in action should it exist, as he also refuses to use any archive footage of the Holocaust in his filmmaking. Alternately, Godard believes that

cinema has a duty to screen this terrible moment in history, which it failed to depict to audiences at the time. While many live-action films have been considered problematic in their engagement with the Nazi past, to some extent, Holocaust animations acknowledge the issues raised by Wiesel, Friendlander and others. *Silence* and *I was a Child of Holocaust Survivors* adopt a “new voice,” as Friendlander suggests is necessary in texts attempting to address the particularities of the Holocaust, through their non-indexical mode of representation. Holocaust films have often been rooted in a historical-realist aesthetic, which assumes a certain authenticity of the past in which spectators become vicarious witnesses (Hirsch 2004, p. 20-23). However, this style is little different from that adopted to represent any historical event on screen. Furthermore, these animations express a new way of speaking through what Fleming (2010i), in a video interview, calls “visual voices,” by moving away from the live action format, which ostensibly resembles real life. *Silence* and *I was a Child of Holocaust Survivors* do not attempt to show the past as it looked, a claim of many historical-realist films. Instead, they combine a variety of different textural surfaces created by different animators in order to present a plurality of visual voices which speak about the turbulent affect of remembering the Holocaust (whether an eye-witness memory in *Silence*, or an act of “post-memory” in *I was a Child of Holocaust Survivors*). This plurality is illustrated by the juxtaposition of archive photographs and drawn cut-outs in *Silence*; the shifting densities of fullness in *I was a Child of Holocaust Survivors*, as illustrated by the changing depth and detail of colour in the film; and the way both films combine animated textures with oral testimony from someone who either directly experienced the Holocaust (in the former film), or as second-generation survivor, who speaks about their deferred, but still traumatic, relationship with the Holocaust (in the latter). Such techniques suggest traumatic histories cannot simply be re-told on apparently objective, historical terms. Texturally, these films reveal the difficult relationship between a traumatic experience and the act of remembering it. They reveal a distrust of the image as teller of truth, instead inviting us to reflect on the relationships between the different voices (visual and oral) they project.

Moreover, these two animated films do not propose to tell a complete story of the Holocaust as Wiesel (1989) implies was attempted by NBC’s mini-series *Holocaust*, which he argues trivialises the past by focusing on a melodramatic depiction of one family whose individual stories each conveniently stand in for particular significant narratives of the Holocaust. Alternately, Holocaust animations are often the stories of survivors or their offspring and are therefore generally told in a first-person reflective mode. Annabelle Honess Roe (2013) suggests that in autobiographical works, animation

functions ...as an alternative way of ‘accessing’ the past. Through animating personal, collective and post-memories, this aesthetic approach becomes a way to comment on the ephemeral nature of both history and, importantly, memory.” (p. 142)

While neither *Silence* nor *I was a Child of Holocaust Survivors* were created by survivors, their testimony anchors the meaning of the images, and both Tana and Bernice endorsed the animated interpretations of their stories. The differentiation in fullness and sketchedness throughout both films illustrate the “ephemeral nature” of memory that Honess Roe refers to – expressing animation’s ability to engage with the past in a way live-action film cannot. While live-action film can attempt to recreate or resemble the past, animated films can instead begin to engage with its affects and subjective memories.

Other Holocaust animations not based directly on testimony still draw attention to the sensual qualities of memory, such as *Seven Minutes in the Warsaw*

Ghetto (Johan Oettinger, 2012). While not based on testimony, Oettinger's film is nonetheless based on real events, and reveals the fractured mechanics of its characters – preventing it from depicting a purely realist image of the past. Visually and aurally, many Holocaust animations emphasise that they are films about remembering the Holocaust, inasmuch as educating their audience about the historical attributes of the event. Subjective statements are not complemented by seemingly more objective archive photographs as is often seen in live-action documentaries such as *The Last Days* (James Moll, 1998). As Sybil DelGaudio (1997) notes, “animated film ‘exists’ only when it is projected – here is no pre-existing reality, no ‘pro-filmic’ event captured in its occurrence” (p. 190). Thus, Holocaust animations are about the “now” of the film experience, rather than the past: they draw our attention to the specificity of the act of remembering, as well as the object of memory. As Fleming notes in a 2010 interview with the *Vancouver Observer*:
 I sort of took the Holocaust out of the Holocaust. All the stories, all the verisimilitude, all the images, all the photo documentation that is the Holocaust in our minds, that just flashes there when you say that, all of that I took out. ...There are no images. In fact, there's no real detailed stories [sic] of atrocities. It's really about a state of mind. (In Dallian, n.pag)
 Fleming's account of her film resonates with Honess Roes's (2013) understanding of animation and memory, and also with Joanna Boudlin's (2000) phenomenological reading of animation spectatorship. Honess Roe notes that animation's hand-made quality and distinctly non-indexical imagery means the medium is “at one and the same time something more and something less [than the photographic];” thus, that it enables the spectator “to understand how the past is (is not) remembered” rather than attempting to engage in a depiction of History (p. 169). Animation then becomes particularly suitable for exploration issues of memory.

Boudlin notes that, despite animation's material differences to our lived world, we still experience it through our flesh. She explains, animation “extends the possibilities of the viewer's embodied responses” (p. 63), in such a way, to allow us to explore experiences of interiority – fantasy, dreams and memory – in a tangible, material manner. Holocaust animations therefore provide an opportunity to focus on the internal – the affect of Holocaust memory, not only the external, or the when, how, where and to whom it happened. Many Holocaust live-action films, such as *Schindler's List* (Steven Spielberg, 1993) adopt a documentary aesthetic in order to *look like the past* as if they attempt to replace Lanzmann and Godard's “missing images” of the Holocaust. Animated films cannot claim any sense of “authenticity,” because they are aesthetically fantastical or abstract. From the outset, they strive to show a *different truth*: one rooted in the affective and subjective qualities of experience rather than any sense of “objectivity.” As Paul Wells (1998) notes, animation is often adopted by

those who wish to make a film which illustrates an experience of life led in a distinctive and potentially unknown way to others[. ...] Animation in [this] penetrative mode thus becomes a *mediator* of possibilities, offering as close to a visceral revelation of the condition as a medium of expression can offer. Narrative in this mode is very much determined by the intention to reflect the immediacy of sensual experience as it characterises the ability to conduct everyday lives taken for granted by others. (p. 122)

As Wells continues to explain, animation is not necessarily concerned with physical reality, but rather the metaphysical: the meaning we attribute to our experience of reality (p. 11). Such meaning however, does not have to be epistemological, but rather animation can work in what Wells (2002) calls the “primal mode” – a state which explores the sensory and consciousness (p. 71). Animation has the potential to emphasise pre-linguistic knowledge, rather than reinforcing the Cartesian notion

that seeing is to know (in the traditional sense). To view animated films such as *Silence* and *I was a Child of Holocaust Survivors* is not to *know* the Holocaust (for we can never fully comprehend an event we have not lived), but to *experience* memory of it. In light of this thinking, these works can be considered to explicate Laura U. Marks's (2000) assertion that film enables "haptic visuality;" or, the ability to *feel* and *touch* surfaces through our eyes (p. xi). Though Marks's work focuses specifically on live-action film, such a tendency is evidenced in these animations as they reveal the rough edges and outlines of people, objects and horizons; express disintegrating images; shift between sketchedness and fullness; and explicate the clear construction of motion (or the illusion of motion) emphasised by the frame-by-frame nature of animated movement. Such films thus encourage us to understand or to see the world through textures.

A phenomenological reading of *Silence* and *I was a Child of Holocaust Survivors*

To appreciate the sensuous potential of Holocaust animations and their ability to engage us on a prelinguistic level, it is useful to turn to phenomenology, a field of philosophy which takes this notion of physicality as its subject of study. There are generally considered to be two schools of phenomenology: transcendental, influenced by the work of Edmund Husserl which proposes temporarily bracketing out – or epoching – the horizons of the lived world in order to study essences as they are experienced individually before returning to the moment as a whole (Husserl 1998, p. 59-60); and existential phenomenology, which developed from the work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty and distinguishes itself from the Husserlian approach by focusing on the significance of the body in experience. While it is Merleau-Ponty's (2000) approach that has mostly informed contemporary film phenomenology, Spencer Shaw (2008), in his book about cinematic consciousness, notes that it is not necessary to completely disregard Husserl's transcendental methodology. Shaw argues that

nowhere is it suggested that in carrying out the change of attitude necessary for these procedures the real world should somehow be deserted or negated, as many commentators insist on seeing it: Quite on the contrary, the purpose of the epoché and reduction is exactly to enable us to approach the world in a way that will allow for a disclosure of its true sense. (p. 9)

Shaw refers here to a common criticism of Husserl's work; that his bracketing-out of the real misses the important context of the essences analysed. It is from this perspective that existential phenomenology has become more popular in contemporary film studies. However, as both Shaw (p. 9) notes, and Husserl emphasises in his writing (2002, p. 85), the attempt to bracket out the real world never refutes its importance to the essences of consciousness; rather, it is an attempt to forget presumed judgments of the world that we have taken for granted. One can thus understand Husserl as focusing on the subjectivity of experience, which is also of interest to existential phenomenologists. Thinking in material terms, then, we might consider the epoché a process of *fading out* rather than a removal of the context of the real world – its relevance and import is still acknowledged but it is not the focus of attention in the phenomenological attitude.

The manner in which the animated film experience detaches us from the quotidian and encourages us to see and experience a horizon quite different to that which we are used to suggests that perhaps it is an experience of the epoché, or, more simply, a moment where we are called to focus on a specific sensation, or essence of experience – for example, in *Silence* and *I was a Child of Holocaust Survivors*, memory. In light of Shaw's suggestion, I want to briefly explain how both phenomenological

approaches might work together to help elucidate viewing these animated Holocaust films as embodied experiences which then encourage reflection upon the nature of remembering. In doing this, I will focus on two phenomenological concerns relevant to my case studies. I consider these Holocaust animations as experiences of Husserl's epoché, or, a space where we are called to reflect upon the essence of memory, and then, considering a more existential approach, I turn to the materiality of animation and the malleability of animated flesh considering Marks's thinking on mimesis and the film experience.

The Holocaust animation as epoché

Husserl (1983) describes the epoché as an excluding and parathesizing of "any single mental processes [sic] whatever of consciousness," during which "the single facts, the facticity of the natural world taken universally, disappear from theoretical regard" (p. 65-67). Holocaust animations can offer such a space both beyond and yet beside a physical reality we have taken for granted, a space where we can focus on interiority and specifically on the conscious process of memory and its affect. As Wells (1998) argues, animation can be "penetrative" in this respect, with the ability to evoke the internal space and portray the invisible. Abstract concepts and previously unimaginable states can be visualised through animation in ways that are difficult to achieve or which remain unpersuasive in the live-action context. Penetration is essentially a *revelatory* tool, used to reveal conditions or principles which are hidden or beyond the comprehension of the viewer. Instead of transforming materials or symbolising particular ideas, penetration enables animation to operate beyond the confines of the dominant modes of representation to characterise a condition or principle in *itself*. (p. 122)

Wells echoes Husserl's notion of parenthesis, or, identifying with specific essences *in themselves*. By visualising abstract concerns of consciousness, such as memory and trauma, animation is able to draw specific attention to such mental processes, which usually occur without our reflection.

As such, *Silence* creates a space which might be considered to be a Deleuzian "any space whatever" (Deleuze 1986, p. 105), which constitutes a popular analytical approach in film studies. Gilles Deleuze, however, uses this term in relation to spaces which resemble part of our physical human world, but have lost their specificity and are haunted by anonymity (such as the modernist city). In this framework, it might thus be more useful to distinguish the abstract space created by the film's juxtaposition of archive footage with a faceless cut-out of a hand-drawn young girl floating on top of it to express a transcendental space beyond our physical reality. This space may be best described as the epoché – a parenthesis in which our focus is drawn to a specific essence of consciousness rather than only a natural horizon of lived experience. Tana's free-floating figure invites us to detach from objective notions of the past as signified by the archive photographs on which she is superimposed, and to focus on the relationship between past and present created by the process of memory. This invitation is further supported by the fadedness and graininess of the archive imagery which represents a tangible lived horizon, but is distorted by its material corrosion. Of course, though, the lived world, as represented here by the archive, is not entirely disregarded.

In *I was a Child of Holocaust Survivors*, a similar effect is created by the collage of styles designed by the project's numerous animators and the distinguishable spaces the film appears to move between without narrative rationale: the exterior world as perceived by the protagonist with plain backgrounds, tints of grey and thick black outlines; the internal affects of this world expressed through harsh black backgrounds with white carvings; and the protagonist's fantastical imaginings of the Holocaust depicted in bright colours against a white background. As with Tana's detached black and white figure in *Silence*, here the viewer is once again invited to free-float through

and across spaces. The constant shifting between these spaces is emphasised by changing densities of fullness and sketchedness, the collapsing of images into abstract scribble, such as when she is witness to the concentration camp corpses, and the use of *shimmering* – an animation technique in which an image is drawn in three very slightly different places and in editing. These images are alternated throughout what appears to be a single shot, and prevents the image appearing too flat and still. In *I was the Child of a Holocaust Survivor*, the shimmering effect is particularly pronounced during scenes in which Bernice is surrounded by Holocaust survivors. As Bernice watches the Eichmann trial with her parents and their friends, they are expressed using a thin black outline to their figures against an empty background, which is not a dense image. The outlines of their bodies and the television image seem to shake vigorously, revealing the image's instability to draw attention to the fragility of memory – it is such sequences which provoke Bernice's trauma. By contrast, the scenes in which she seems to escape into her own thoughts do not exhibit shimmering and are rather flat in comparison, expressing a certain safety. Yet, they are distinguishable by their stark black background and firm outline (akin to Tana's figure expressing an endless void), but Bernice's space ultimately seems more stable than the domestic one in which she continuously seems to have to confront Holocaust survivors. We are not invited into specific geographic, metaphoric or historical spaces in the film, but rather internal ones affected by memories of experiences. Moreover, in Fleming's film, frames-within-frames and sudden shifts to dense black backgrounds emphasise the film's focus on memory as bracketed from lived experience; the frequent black backgrounds act as asides and the comic-book style frames serve as visual parentheses.

The lack of defined backgrounds or visual horizons in which these films anchor their animation suggests they act as experiences of epoché because they lack depths of fullness we would usually associate with the natural world. In *Silence* the archive image, though photographic in nature, is only a faded image of a past is somewhat recognizable, and there is little detail to Tana's figure, nor any facial features with which we can connect. The film's employment of blackness, sketchedness and outlines signifies an existence within a parenthesis – an aside to reality which is still deeply related to lived experience, yet encourages us to focus on very specific essences of it. The images of Bernice's lived-world are rather incomplete – little detail in the background or characters' costumes, and often shimmer. While they too clearly refer to real experiences, emphasised by the human voice in the soundtrack, these scenes are distinctly different in their materiality to the lived-world expressing a specific subjectivity. When watching these animations we do not look at representations of different physical spaces and times; rather we are asked to consider how the world has been remembered by an Other and our attention is drawn to the interiority of this Other: an expression materialised through animated textures.

Materiality and the malleability of animated flesh

The film screening, however, is still an experience in which the audience relates to the film as present, embodied beings. Thus it is possible to combine both transcendental and existential approaches of phenomenology to our understanding of these animations. While the former allows us to explain the *act* of the film experience, the latter allows us to identify *how* it is experienced. More simply, Marks (2000) explains that spectators act in corporeal mimesis with the film body through haptically identifying with films. She states, "mimesis is thus a form of representation based on a particular, material contact at a particular moment" (p.

138). It is in this fashion that Marks suggests we can relate to some extent with the onscreen memories of other people. However, it is important here to distinguish Marks's definition of "mimesis" from that commonly appropriated in representational theory. She does not refer to the film world re-presenting the real, rather she considers the film experience an act of mimesis, where the spectator reacts along with the film to its subject matter. Marks suggests that "one represents a thing by acting" and this "mimesis, in which one calls up the presence of the other materiality, is an indexical, rather than iconic, relation of similarity" (p.138). The manner by which animation foregrounds materiality through outlines and its explication of frame-by-frame movement might encourage questions on how we can be mimetically engaged, but its textural difference to our own experience of the lived world draws our attention to surfaces and textures *as* experienced and *as* ways of communicating memories which might otherwise be difficult to explain or recall. It may seem strange to state that the fantastical mode of animation can encourage reflection on real bodily sensations; however, these films do not completely depart from reality. While the spatiality, textuality (referring back to Barker's concept of textural analysis) and temporality of these animations may differ from our experience of the everyday, they express recognisable iconography of the Holocaust, such as the yellow star or barbed wire, include archive material (in *Silence*) and rely on personal testimony in order to remind us they are deeply rooted in the real. In this respect, mimetic interaction with animation's textural difference from our lived-world emphasises both an otherness and a sameness. And it is through our mimesis with animated textures – a strange Other – that we come to consciously examine processes such as memory which may not often be reflected upon.

If we engage mimetically with the sketchedness and unsteady nature of the shimmering effect in *Silence* and *I was a Child of Holocaust Survivors*, then we are similarly encouraged to reflect on the disruptive, chaotic natural relationship between memory and time. Attention is not only focused on each frame of animated movement as a *moment* but also on the gaps in-between – *that which is not visualised as a memory image*: the outlines that are not formed into complete pictures, or the movements we would naturally expect to happen between each shimmer. Vivian Sobchack (2008) describes the animated line as a signifier of "in-betweenness," as the marker between the inside and outside, the one and the Other, yet the site where they meet in experience (p. 258). She considers the line to be a paradox, in that by appearing in animation, the line also emphasises that it "does not substantially exist 'as such'" – it always "functions as a point to...something else that matters but is not itself matter: a disequilibrium or discontinuity or difference" (p. 258). I would argue further that it is not only the movement of the single line, but shimmering, and shifts in fullness and sketchedness that also act as references to in-betweenness in animated film. The space between the different movements of the shimmer, the emptiness of certain images in *Silence* and *I was a Child of Holocaust Survivors*, and the rough sketched lines seen in both at times, draw attention to lacunae formed in spaces between these elements and thus remind us of the fragility of memory and the gaps which characterise it. Though memories arise in our consciousness in the present, only a few are brought to the surface and even those, particularly in relation to traumatic events, can be incomplete. Yet this incompleteness signifies the distance between past and present which characterises the very act of remembering. In-betweenness is emphasised in *Silence* and *I was a Child of Holocaust Survivors* in the texture of the animated surfaces which shift and shimmer, inviting us to relate to the gaps explicated as we form new memory narratives from the film experience.

In *Silence*, photographic images and post-war animated sequences are not as visually detailed as the scenes illustrating Tana's experiences of trauma; in fact it is the memory images she recalls from the Holocaust that are most distinguishable because of their dark outlines or striking white lines carved into a black background such as when she recalls being in a cattle car. Archive imagery is expressed with particularly pronounced graininess and fadedness suggesting that such photographs, which are often construed, however inaccurate this may be, as *objective*, historical evidence of the past, reveal lacunae that can never show us a true sense of the experience of living in that time and space. The post-war animated sequences contrast to the Holocaust scenes; while the former display a range of colours and an expansive depth of field thus being defined by fullness, the latter are defined by sparseness – simple black and white outlines which reappear and interrupt post-war images to express their traumatic dimension.

As Tana introduces her trip to post-war Sweden, for example, a brief black and white archive footage of a train suddenly transforms through a dissolve into an animated image. Then Grandmother and Tana are seen inside the carriage. They sit against a tan-brown chair, with thick lines defining its different sections. Grandmother's face has smile lines, and clearly defined eyebrows as well as the usual features and her blue coat is shaded in different tones expressing the direction of the light coming through the carriage window. Tana too wears a blue jacket, and looks out the window to the blurred, moving green landscape. She wipes the window and reveals a picturesque country scene. However, this quickly transits into a 'woodcut' style animation where rough, sketched white lines carve the shape of a train with cattle cars into a sparse black background. Roughly scribbled white shapes represent clouds of smoke emerging from the front of the train. While the carriage sequence here expresses an external view of the world with its somewhat realistic colours and detail, the later image starkly contrasts this. Tana cannot show us her traumatic past with detail and colour, it is hazy and a depressing time she can only recall through an aesthetic that emphasises the fear and trauma of that time. *Silence* emphasises the significant difference between external and internal expression of Tana's experiences. By juxtaposing the two, the animation invites us into the space in-between and thus encourages us to appreciate the importance of recognising the entangled relationship of both when remembering the Holocaust. By entering these spaces, we act in mimesis with the films: we too experience the complex layers and lacunae of memory.

I was a Child of Holocaust Survivors further emphasises the different material layers of memory through shifting densities of fullness. We are first confronted with images of Bernice's life defined by black and greyscale, such as the screening of the Eichmann trial discussed above. These images are relatively dense in detail, but do not feature colour which would further distinguish these real experiences from the sequences which clearly represent Bernice's internal thoughts. Interestingly, colour is primarily reserved for Bernice's fantasy of her father as a cowboy-like hero of the Holocaust. While colour is often related to realism in live-action film, here it is specifically used to express a desired history, rather than one that actually happened. The sketchedness and blank horizons of sequences such as the viewing of the Eichmann trial express the hazy nature of memory.

Secondly, we are introduced to Bernice's internal world. This is expressed through white cut-outs of her sitting on a large mountain, or in a swirling haze, carved into sparse black backgrounds. The materiality here emphasises how her experience as a second-generation survivor affects her. For example, while she sits on the mountain as a vulnerable, naked figure, resting her hand under her chin in a contemplative

pose, the mountain is covered in handwriting which looks like it is written on ripped paper. The words (*Gedenk!*! [German, to memorialise] and Yiddish expression, *Oy*) are difficult to discern, and appear to relate to her parents' experiences. Her position above the mess of writing suggests Bernice is haunted by her parents' history, which has been foundational to her own life experiences. She cannot escape the many phrases they repeat, yet that she is attempting to conquer them, as one would a mountain's summit. These images are stable, with no shimmering, and use stark harsh lines to differentiate Bernice and objects from the dark black void of the background. Thus, there seems to be a suggestion that while still haunted by her parents, her internal space is one which she escapes to for some sort of stability. Thirdly, there are images of phantasy. I use the psychoanalytical term "phantasy" here (rather than "fantasy") to express the relationship of these images to trauma and subjectivity. Laplanche and Pontalis (1974) define phantasy as an "imaginary scene in which the subject is a protagonist, representing the fulfilment of a wish...in a manner that is distorted to a greater or lesser extent by defensive processes" (p. 314). Bernice's phantasies come in two forms: those of presence, in which she is figured in front of a pile of corpses in a concentration camp, and those of wish-fulfilment, wherein she places her recently deceased father in the role of hero against the Holocaust. The former, harrowing image places Bernice in the role of her parents, as if attempting to understand what they experienced, perhaps as a way of working through her trauma. While she is not the protagonist in the latter image, it is clearly designed as a defensive mechanism against trauma. The harsh sketchedness, ink blotches and arbitrary scribbles which define the scene where Bernice is positioned as witness to a pile of dead bodies express her inability to really share the experiences of her parents. Thus, the image's photographic equivalent is now iconic of the Holocaust, and yet is only a unstable trace which quickly collapses.

In contrast Bernice's phantasy of wish-fulfilment expressing her father as a cowboy-like hero is defined by distinct lines and slightly more fullness as well as flashes of colour. Watching a Western film on the television, Bernice sees a close-up of horse hooves moving through a yellow space (which one could read as a desert in relation to the conventions of the genre). This image then fills the scene as she narrates, "When war began..." The yellow scratched background with a hint of cold-blue in the centre (which serves as a spotlight on the horse) is starkly more colourful than the majority of the film. Hearing Bernice reference the war in relation to the Western film suggests a merging of reality and fiction, the emergence of a phantasy. The night sky in this sequence contains a crescent moon and large stars and has many more shades and line details than the dark void of her internal space. When her father's silhouetted figure rides to the gates of Auschwitz, the gates are drawn with harsh thick lines, and unlike the post-war images of Bernice and her parents, some background detail is given as barracks can be seen behind the fence. He pushes the gates open effortlessly and a close-up reveals he is wearing a cowboy hat, waistcoat and yellow star. The star is the only coloured element on screen and stands as a reminder of the Holocaust and yet symbolises the sheriff badge iconography of the Western. The overall lack of detail here suggests the phantasy element of this sequence, as a cowboy clearly does not belong to the real history of the Holocaust.

In Bernice's phantasy, the weak victim is transformed into a strong hero. By shifting repeatedly between these different spaces, the film encourages us to mimetically interact with the complexities of the process of remembering traumatic events.

Unlike the objective history some like to attribute to photorealism (which of course is highly questionable), here the subjective is pronounced. Bernice's trauma is exemplified by the film's flitting between memories of real scenarios with her parents, which are never fully defined in relation to density and always shimmer vigorously as if difficult to recall, her internal space, which is dark, but somehow more stable and thus seemingly safer than the external world, and her phantasies – both of pain and pleasure. The wish-fulfilment phantasy sequence exhibits more fullness and hard outlines to characters and objects suggesting that this is the image Bernice wants to remember of her father. While, the scribbles which appear over the images of corpses expresses a desire to forget these scenarios about which one assumes her parents have told her.

The verb “to animate” can mean “to bring to life;” thus animation as a medium by which to engage with Holocaust memories allows these memories to be brought to life and translated from the internal to the material through transmission from screen to the embodied spectator. Memory is always a subjective experience and the many animated textures used in these films enables the individual interpretation of events, rather than the objective, historical essences of them to come to the foreground. However, this transmission from screen to spectator is not only personal but cultural: the memories can be passed down to new generations as the animation is repeatedly projected. Like traumatic memories which recur, these films can be revisited at any time. However, unlike individual experiences of trauma, these animated images can be controlled. They do not invade our present, rather we invite them into our lives and thus we adopt mastery over these traumatic memories: we *choose* “never to forget,” an idiom regularly related to Holocaust commemoration. No longer do the phantasy images appear intrusive, but are fused into narratives alongside other memory images we retain from the film experience. Victoria Grace Walden is a PhD researcher and teaching fellow at Queen Mary, University of London. She runs the international, interdisciplinary research group ‘the Holocaust, contemporary genocide, popular culture and digital technology’ and also works as a freelance Holocaust educator.

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